4

The Advantages of General Infirmaries Illuſtrated.

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT

The Cathedral Church of *Hereford*,

BEFORE

JOHN FREEMAN, Jun. Eſq. STEWARD,

AND

The other CONTRIBUTERS

TO THE

GENERAL INFIRMARY at HEREFORD;

On TUESDAY JULY 3, 1781.

BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA ·

By A. RUDD, M. A.
PREBENDARY of HEREFORD, and MASTER of the GRAMMAR-SCHOOL.

Printed at the Deſire of the Steward, and ſold for the Service of the Charity.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

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TO

JOHN FREEMAN, jun. Esq.

THE

FOLLOWING DISCOURSE,

PREACHED AT HIS REQUEST,

AND

PUBLISHED BY HIS COMMAND,

IS

Most respectfully Inscribed,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

TO

JOHN FREEMAN, Jun. Esq.

THE

FOLLOWING DISCOURSE,

PREACHED AT HIS REQUEST,

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Most respectfully Inscribed,

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THE AUTHOR.

Advertiſement.

THE Reader is earneſtly requeſted to believe, that the following Diſcourſe was written without the moſt diſtant view to the Preſs.

THE Candour of the Audience however deemed it worthy of Publication, adding at the ſame time an Argument not eaſily to be reſiſted; that it might in ſome degree promote the Intereſts of the Charity.

UPON this Principle it is ſubmitted to the Publick.

ALTHOUGH Apologies for Compoſitions have never anſwered any other End than that of exciting either Ridicule, or Contempt, yet it may

(at

(at leaſt with the feeling Mind) in ſome degree mitigate the Severity of Criticiſm, when it ſhall be known, that at the Time when this Sermon was ſent to the Preſs, the heart of the Author was rent with the moſt acute Anguiſh---Anguiſh ariſing from the Loſs of an amiable, accompliſhed, and affectionate Wife.

THE Author having ſome time ſince publickly avowed an Intention of ſpeedily publiſhing ſome Remarks on Education, thinks he cannot have a more favourable opportunity of explaining the motives which induced him to *write* on the Subject, as well as the Reaſon which determined him not to *publiſh*.

BEING at the Head of a Grammar School, he drew up for his own Direction, ſuch hints as ſeemed connected with the Subject of Education,

tion, and having found them uſeful to himſelf, flattered himſelf that they might be of Service to others engaged in the ſame Line of Life.

HIS work was finiſhed, and on the Eve of Publication, when Mr. Knox's Treatiſe fell into his hands, in which the Subject of Education is ſo copiouſly and elegantly diſcuſſed, that there appeared no Reaſon for troubling the Publick with any thing (eſpecially of an inferior Nature) on the ſame Topic.

THIS is in reality the Reaſon which has induced the Author to ſuppreſs his Eſſay, but having contracted an Engagement, by publickly avowing his Deſign, he could not be ſatisfied, without as publickly aſſigning the Motive for not fulfilling it.

Hereford,
Auguſt 31, 1781.

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Hereford,
August 31, 1782.

XIV. PROVERBS—31ſt.

He that oppreſſeth the Poor reproaches his Maker; but he that honoureth him, *hath Mercy on the Poor.*

THE Diſtinctions of Rank, and the Deſcription of Riches and Poverty, mark only thoſe Periods of Society when the natural Rights of Men have been reſigned for the Sake of Privileges highly ſuperior to them, and when the condition of Individuals is diſcriminated by their peculiar Exertions, and the ſituations of Life in which they are placed.

THE Subordinations of Civil Society, though they create a difference in a political, create none in a moral view of things; for

no Inſtitutions of man can ſuperſede the poſitive Law of GOD, or cancel that obligation which hath connected the Intereſts of others with our own, and enjoined us not only to rejoice with them that do rejoice, but alſo to weep with them that weep *.

THE Duties of humanity and attention to the ſufferings of our Brethren are however too often imperfectly diſcharged. Wealth and Power have in them ſomething highly flattering to the mixed Character of Man, and, in the Purſuit of thoſe Gratifications which they generally can command, the voice of Grief and Languor, of Pain and Poverty, rarely reaches the ear, and ſtill more rarely the heart of him, who wiſhes to diſmiſs to a more convenient Seaſon, whatever may interrupt his preſent Enjoyment. But let a Man keep as far diſtant as he may from the houſe of mourning, there will ſtill be many occaſions when Scenes of Sorrow and Sickneſs will obtrude themſelves upon him; when he muſt either renounce all Pretenſions to Humanity, or acknowledge the Claim of thoſe, whom to oppreſs, is to inſult his Maker, but whom

* Rom. xii. 15.

to compaſſionate, is graciouſly declared by the Sovereign of the World, Honour paid unto himſelf.

In examining the Hiſtory of other Kingdoms, particularly the Ancient, and comparing their Eſtabliſhments and Practices with thoſe of our own Age and Nation, if it be found that there be more in the former of Glory and Grandeur, it muſt yet be allowed, that the later Ages of the World have cultivated the Arts of Humanity with ſuperior Succeſs.

If we attend, for inſtance, to the manners and inſtitutions of the Romans during the moſt proſperous Condition of the Empire; if we review their publick Buildings and Monuments of Art, we ſhall be ſtruck, even from the Idea that their Ruins give us, with the Extent of their Deſigns, and the Succeſs with which they were executed,—the Remains of their Architecture, however, are calculated only to inſpire us with notions of their *Magnificence*; *ſuperb Temples*, *ſumptuous Villas*, and *triumphal Arches*, forming the whole of this auguſt Scene; no Hiſtorian has men-

tioned, and no mouldering Ruin authorizes us to ſurmize, that they had any *Houſes of Compaſſion*, where Age might repoſe, or Sickneſs be relieved.

If from this examination we turn to their Laws, we ſhall find many of them dictated by a bold and enterprizing Spirit, by an unbounded Deſire of Power, aſpiring to its object frequently in the moſt exceptionable Manner. The Rights of the Poor were at this Seaſon totally diſregarded, and their Perſons were conſidered as ſubject to the Caprice and Tyranny of their haughty Maſters. Many of their Fellow-Creatures were treated as Beaſts of Burden, and it is recorded, to the laſting and indelible diſgrace of one of their celebrated Characters, that he refuſed ſupport even to thoſe, whoſe health and ſtrength had been waſted in his Service *. But the mild Genius of Chriſtianity introduced a reciprocal Connection between Man and Man; and a humane Politician will conſider the health and welfare of Individuals, as the beſt Riches of the State. Though Times of national Danger will require the moſt complete and vigorous Exertion of every

* See Plutarch in the life of Cato Major.

Faculty,

Faculty, yet ſhould it be remembered, that they who have ſacrificed the moſt valuable of Earthly Bleſſings in any honeſt Employment, have a Right to expect the Bounty of the Rich. Surely their Infirmity may without Offence implore that Subſiſtence, which their Strength once commanded! An Aſylum for the Indigent Invalid is an Eſtabliſhment, which, tho' at all times peculiarly proper, comes recommended with additional Motives of Force to the Attention of every highly civilized Period of Society. To the various Evils, the Portion and Birth-Right of our Inheritance, Luxury, and a Spirit of Adventure, have ſuperadded a new and numerous Claſs.

LITTLE does the opulent Exacter of Elegance conſider the miſerable condition to which *his* deſires devote a numerous Train of Artiſts, whoſe ſickly occupation deprives the State at an early Period of Life of many of her moſt uſeful Members, or confines to the Chamber of Pain and Sickneſs, Age early anticipated, and Weakneſs ſuing for Support long before the general Period of Regular Decay.

THE

* THE God and Father of Mercies, who hath given us richly all things to enjoy, cannot behold with Indifference, this wanton waſte of the Species, and if our Pride hath created a new Claſs of Diſorders, our Humanity ought certainly to alleviate their Effects, and mitigate their Violence. When we conſider the Progreſs of Luxury and Refinement in a State, we are not to direct our Attention to the higher Orders alone, they indeed begin, and they alſo communicate; a rapid Change in a ſhort time takes place, and the baneful Effects of a Luxurious imitation of Manners taint the Bodies, as well as the Minds, of the Inferior Ranks of Society. The Precepts of Religion are therefore enforced by Reaſons of Policy, and what we are commanded by our Bleſſed Lord to perform as a Duty, we are likewiſe inclined to, in behalf of the Strength of that State which ſupports us, the Proſperity of that Community of which we are Members, and in compliance with thoſe finer feelings of the Soul which induce us to ſympathize with the Sufferings of the Poor, eſpecially when aggravated by the Preſſure of Sickneſs.

* 1 Timothy, vi. 17.

POVERTY

POVERTY ſupported by health is enabled to provide not only for an Individual, but for numbers; and on this very account, when its Efforts are impeded by Diſorder, there cannot be a more calamitous Scene deſcribed than that which then preſents itſelf. A long and uninterrupted courſe of Health and Strength ſeems to inſure a Continuance of them, and on this inſecure Foundation are raiſed the various Connections of ſocial Life; the Characters of Huſband and Parent with their complicated Duties, increaſe the neceſſity of the moſt vigorous exertion, whilſt Diſorder and Sickneſs preclude the feebleſt Attempts. Although the diſintereſted humanity of the Profeſſors of the Art of Medicine ſhould be generouſly influenced by the Deſire of helping the helpleſs, and removing the Diſeaſes of their indigent Brethren, however we might be led to applaud the Beneficence of their Deſign, we ſhould be conſtrained to acknowledge the Inefficacy of their attempts, ſince in caſes of Danger it is neceſſary, that *the Skill of the attendants*, *the ſtillneſs of the Scene*, and a *Strictneſs of Regimen* (Advantages all of which are wanting in the Deſolate Manſions of the Poor) ſhould conſpire with the Preſcription, and accelerate

celerate the Effects of the Medicine. And hence, from the enlarged Ideas and generous aſſociations of our Country, almoſt every Province is furniſhed with an Edifice conſecrated to the Offices of Humanity, wherein a ſmall deduction from the Income of the Affluent, affords ſuch Relief to the Indigent Invalid, as Equals every Aſſiſtance which the moſt unbounded Fortune can command.

In the Inſtitution of an Aſylum for the Poor, particular Attention ſhould be paid to thoſe Diſorders, which moſt fatally aſſault the Human Frame. And as we ſeem actuated by a general unanimity of Sentiment in providing an ample Edifice for the Reception of the diſeaſed, we ought to be particularly zealous to ſecure in it a Retreat for thoſe unhappy Objects, whom Providence hath viſited with one of its ſevereſt Judgements—*Loſs of Reaſon.*

For other viſitations the attention of Friendſhip, and the aid of Medicine, provide ſome relief, but the fatal Tranſformation that this deſperate Malady cauſes, baffles the beſt Endeavours of the neareſt Friends, and cannot

not be effectually relieved, or even moderately alleviated, but by an uniform and unceaſing attention, regulated by the ſoundeſt principles of medical knowledge, in conjunction with the moſt intimate acquaintance with the Human heart.

LONELINESS, which is alſo fatally connected with Lunacy, lengthens the ſufferings of its unhappy Victims, whilſt it diminiſhes their Reſources, and whilſt they ſtand ſevered from all the Social Connections of Life, diſabled by their calamity from receiving any Benefit from the State under which they live, they demand, in the moſt forcible Language of Supplication, that ſupport from others which their Calamity prevents them from procuring for themſelves.

THEIR Condition is generally moſt ſincerely to be compaſſionated, and moſt liberally relieved, ſince their misfortune comes upon them by no fault of their own, by the irreverſible appointment of that Providence which ordereth all things wiſely, and of that GOD, who, in the nervous Language of the

Prophet *, in his Dealings with the Children of Men, hideth himſelf.

An Eſtabliſhment for Objects of this melancholy deſcription might be enabled in ſome degree to provide for itſelf, by requiring the Friends of thoſe who offered, to ſtipulate a certain Payment in proportion to their Abilities; by which means, at a much leſs Expence than is now incurred, an Aſylum of Credit might be prepared, and a Retreat (guarded from all thoſe objections which are urged againſt the common Receptacles of this kind) might be ſecured.

The Treatment of Lunatics, thoſe particularly of the Lower Claſs of People, till the late humane and neceſſary Interpoſition of the Legiſlature, was ſuch as reflected the higheſt diſgrace upon us both as *Chriſtians* and as *Citizens*;—the wretched Sufferer was delivered into the Power of Ignorance and Barbarity; Brutal Severity governed the whole of his Treatment, and a degree of Skill, which would have been derided in any other Practitioner of Medicine, was thought ſufficiently quali-

* Iſaiah xlv. 15.

fied

fied to combat the moſt fatal and formidable of human Maladies.

WHERE the Point is clear a Comment is ſuperfluous, and all future deciſions, with regard to a *Permanent Eſtabliſhment* for theſe calamitous objects, cannot be recommended to more competent Judges than thoſe, under whoſe Skill and Management our little *Zoar**, the hoſpitable Aſylum of Indigent Infirmity, hath thus far proſpered ſo well†.

TO the political Advantages reſulting from an Infirmary, conſidered as a Fountain of Health and Strength, may be added thoſe ſpiritual Benefits which may be derived from it as a Seminary of Piety. The human Heart, callous to every good Precept, and

* Geneſis xix. 22.

† The Author begs Leave to recommend to every Friend of the unfortunate, a ſmall Pamphlet, intituled, "An Account of the Riſe and preſent Eſtabliſhment of the Lunatick Hoſpital in Manchester," wherein will be ſeen how effectually Benevolence and Zeal have ſucceeded in ſecuring an Aſylum for the moſt miſerable of human Sufferers.

deaf to every ſuggeſtion of Virtue, in the Inſolence of Health, is rendered in the Hour of Affliction malleable, and becomes ſuſceptible of every Impreſſion which the Moral Artiſt is inclined to make upon it; the Seaſon of Sickneſs is the Seaſon of ſerious thought; and tho' with returning Health too many men return to their former diſſipated Courſes, yet a converſion wrought in the Breaſt of a Sinner, with the peculiar Circumſtances of Health reſtored (under Divine Providence) by the Humanity of a Fellow-Creature, will be long and effectually remembered, and will have a very active Force in regulating his future Conduct.—If the Morals of the common people were ever an Object of Attention, either in a religious or civil view, they are moſt evidently ſo at this time, when every thing that is venerable in Religion, or reſpectable in Government, is audaciouſly ridiculed by Arguments laboriouſly worked up by the dull Malignity of a bad head, and a worſe heart. Under the highly beneficial View therefore of relieving the mental as well as bodily Maladies of Individuals, the Inſtitution of general Infirmaries becomes an object worthy the moſt ſerious Conſideration of every Friend

of Religion, and every zealous well-wiſher to the Intereſts of his Country.

WHILST we gratefully remember the benevolent Labours of thoſe who are at this Time, by liberal Aſſiſtances, laudable Alacrity, and unremitting Attention, variouſly conſpiring to execute a moſt humane and benevolent Plan, we muſt not forget, that no ſmall Tribute of Praiſe is due to the Memory of one of the firſt and moſt ſanguine Friends of this Eſtabliſhment; of a Perſon who joined to a perfect Knowledge of the Rights of Society, the moſt ſincere deſire to promote them *; whoſe Generoſity was remote from Oſtentation, and whoſe Services flowed from the pure and uncorrupted channel of a liberal and expanded Heart.—Who wept for him that was in Trouble, and whoſe Soul was grieved for the Poor †.

* The Author wiſhes this to be conſidered as a ſmall though *ſincere* Tribute of Eſteem to the memory of GEORGE TERRY, Eſq. who died on Sunday December 17, 1780.—Luctuoſum hoc ſuis; acerbum patriæ; grave bonis omnibus.—Cic.

† Job xxx. 25.

Of all the modes of Charity which do honour to our Age and Nation, no one can deſerve greater Applauſe than this which we are now aſſembled to promote; which has for its Baſis the moſt diſintereſted Generoſity, and which ſtands clear of every Objection that can be urged by Parſimony, or ſeconded by Prejudice.

The Evil to be removed is plain and obvious: Sickneſs cannot be feigned (were the human mind capable of attempting it) when Medical Skill has examined the Symptoms, and Medical Integrity pronounced them to be deſcriptive of genuine Diſeaſe.

Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye, my Friends, for the hand of God hath touched me *, is the language of grief; it is the laſt appeal of the weary and heavy laden, of him whoſe ſoul is faint within him.

Such is the tranſitory nature of all terreſtrial bleſſings, that frequently in the very moment when they ſeem firmly ſettled, the moſt fatal Reverſe is about to take place.

* Job xix. 21.

God

God ruleth the world by laws which we cannot comprehend. Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him; or who will ſay unto him, what doeſt thou? The hand, which today is benevolently employed in ſuccouring the calamities of others, may ſhortly be extended to ſupplicate for itſelf; and the tear which we ſhed over the afflictions of our brethren may ſoon be required by ſufferings of our own.

In the proſecution of the benevolent deſign which calls us together, let it be remembered that we meet as *Brethren*, and that, however variouſly we may chooſe to act and reaſon on other occaſions, we can have on this but *one common Motive*, and that is of ſo tranſcendent a Nature as to abſorb all meaner Principles. — * Glory to God in the higheſt — on Earth Peace, Good Will towards Men, being the ſole Objects that we labour to promote.

PRAYER.

May that God, who hath reſerved a Bleſſing for him that provideth for the † Sick and

* Luke ii. 14. † Pſalm xli. 1.

Needy,

Needy, graciously behold this your Labour of Love *. May he condescend to receive your Alms and Oblations dedicated to the Cause of Humanity, and offered in obedience to that Divine Institution which hath inseparably connected the Love of God with that of our Brother †.

May he, who regardeth not the magnitude of the Gift, but the mind of the Giver, enable you to gather for yourselves a good reward in the Day of your Necessity. And, as the Alleviation of the sorrows and sufferings of your Brethren here, has been your truly Christian Labour, may you finally reap its reward in those Regions, where God shall wipe away all Tears.—Where there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain ‡.

Now to God *the Father*, *the Son*, and *the Holy Ghost*, *the Creator*, *Redeemer* and *Sanctifier*, be rendered all *Honour*, *Glory*, and *Praise*, now and for evermore. *Amen*.

* Heb. vi. 10. † 1 John iv. 21. ‡ Rev. xxi. 4.